

Appl. No. 10/084,608
Amdt. Dated January 6, 2005
Reply to Office Action of September 7, 2004

Attorney Docket No. 81784.0253
Customer No. 26021

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-19 were pending in the Application, with Claims 1-13 and 17-19 having been withdrawn. By this Amendment, Claims 1-13 and 17-19 are being cancelled, claim 15 is being amended to correct a typographical error, and new Claims 20-25 are being added, to advance the prosecution of the Application. No new matter is involved.

In Paragraph 1 on page 2 of the Office Action, the requirement is made that non-elected claims 1-13 be cancelled. In response, Applicant is cancelling claims 1-13 together with non-elected claims 17-19.

In Paragraph 2 which begins on page 2 of the Office Action, claims 17-19, newly added in the prior amendment, are held to be directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed. Because an action on the merits of the originally-presented invention has issued, that invention is said to have been constructively elected, and claims 17-19 are held to be withdrawn from consideration. Claims 17-19, however, have been cancelled herein together with claims 1-13.

In Paragraph 4 on page 3 of the Office Action, claims 14-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,608,556 of Koma in view of U.S. Patent 5,880,797 of Yamada et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Paragraph 7 which begins on page 5 of the Office Action contains a response to Applicant's previous arguments. In this Paragraph, the Examiner states that nowhere in the claim language or the specification is the term "slit" defined as a cut in the electrode, as presumed by Applicant in the arguments. Secondly, even if it is assumed that Applicant has defined a slit, the concave portions taught by Yamada

still meet the limitation because the depressed regions clearly represent “cuts” in the electrode. Such arguments are respectfully traversed by Applicant.

In the CD-ROM version of the Oxford English Dictionary, the term “slit” is defined as “cut” or “incision”, and “aperture”, so that further definition by the present specification is unnecessary. More specifically, the CD-ROM version of the Oxford English Dictionary defines the term “slit” as follows:

“1. A straight and narrow cut or incision; an aperture resembling a cut of this description: a. In clothing; sometimes in specific senses, as the opening in the front of a shirt, a pocket, etc.”.

Moreover, the concave portion of the electrode disclosed in Yamada merely indicates depression of the electrode and does not indicate the absence of an electrode capable of applying a voltage to the liquid crystal. On the contrary, the slit of the present invention is a cut in the electrode, at which portion no electrode exists. In the concave portion of the electrode as disclosed in Yamada, a voltage is applied to the liquid crystal. It is therefore apparent that the concave portion of Yamada has an orientation control function which electrically differs from that of the slit of the present invention.

It is also clear that the concave portions of the electrode in Yamada are not “projections” in the manner defined in claim 14.

Still further, Yamada does not disclose an electrode opposing a pixel electrode, and therefore includes no description or suggestion that an orientation controller is provided on a common electrode opposing the pixel electrode. According to the present invention, the orientation directions of the liquid crystal within one pixel are accurately controlled by the interaction between the orientation controller provided on the common electrode side and the slits or projections provided on the pixel electrode. This motivation of the present invention is neither

described nor suggested by Yamada which does not even recognize the necessity of such an interaction.

Koma discloses an orientation control window in a common electrode. However, in Koma, no slit or projections are formed in the pixel electrode and the pixel electrode is not divided by these slits or projections into a plurality of electrode regions.

Consequently, neither Koma or Yamada describe or suggest slits or projections which divide the pixel electrode into a plurality of electrode regions. Therefore, claims 14-16 are submitted to clearly distinguish patentably over the attempted combination of Koma and Yamada et al.

New independent claims 20 and 23 are also submitted to clearly distinguish patentably over the cited art. Claim 20 is like claim 14, except that it further recites at the end thereof "each of said plurality of orientation controllers associated with a corresponding one of said plurality of pixel electrodes being formed to extend linearly". In the case of claim 23, such claim is like claim 14, but further recites at the end thereof "said two or more electrode regions being disposed along said one or more slits or projections". As noted above, the attempted combination of Koma and Yamada et al. cannot disclose or suggest a liquid crystal display as defined in claims 20 and 23.

Claims 21 and 22 are like claims 15 and 16 except that they depend from claim 20. Because they contain all of the limitations of claim 20, claims 21 and 22 are also submitted to clearly distinguish patentably over the art. Similar comments apply to new claims 24 and 25 which are like claims 15 and 16 except that they depend from new claim 23. Because such claims depend from claim 23 and contain all of the limitations thereof, they are also submitted to clearly distinguish patentably over the art.

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In conclusion, claims 14-16 and new claims 20-25 are submitted to clearly distinguish patentably over the art for the reasons discussed above. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at the Los Angeles, California telephone number (213) 337-6700 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

If there are any fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,
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